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Follow-up to the World Summit for Social Development and the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly: priority theme: Addressing inequalities and challenges to social inclusion through fiscal, wage and social protection policies

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The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 36 and 37 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

* The present statement is issued without formal editing.

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Statement

Global Citizenship as a Tool for Uniting in the Achieving Inclusion and Equality through Equitable Wages, Fiscal Policies and Social Protections

We live in a global society. That reality has the potential to make us more united, more inclusive, and more equal. And yet, our global society has in some instances created new inequities while it enhances old ones. As noted in the World Programme of Action for Youth, "benefits are very unevenly shared, while the costs are unevenly distributed" (p.44). For this reason, the international community unites in confronting inequalities through inclusive social protections that will bring about a more just and equitable world. And in the face of this goal, the question arises of "how"? *How* do we even begin to bring about a world wherein all are included, and all have equal access to a secure life?

The concept of Global Citizenship arose from the realization of the interconnectedness and interdependence of humanity within the smallest communities and across the most distant borders. Global Citizenship is a pathway not a passport. It demands we walk together in cooperation, partnership, equality, and peace. It places us on the common ground of our common humanity and its interdependence on the environment we must respect. And it is a pathway toward the core values of these United Nations: peace and security, justice, equality, human dignity, and environmental sustainability.

Global Citizenship education is now a target within Sustainable Development Goal 4. UNESCO states that "The primary aim of Global Citizenship Education is nurturing respect for all, building a sense of belonging to a common humanity and helping learners become responsible and active global citizens." Furthermore, UNESCO calls for Global Citizenship Education to be used as a tool for forging, "more just, peaceful, tolerant and inclusive societies."

Is not the aim of CSoCD to bring about that more just, that more peaceful, that more tolerant and inclusive society?

And so, we too need a tool. Therefore, we submit Global Citizenship as this tool for uniting and succeeding in the goal of resolving inequalities, and we call upon those joined by the aims of CSoCD, as they set out on this path, to reach for the Global Citizenship tools delineated here forward as they strive to bring about inclusive social protections.

Interconnectedness — Four-billion people, 55% of the humanity that make up our global society, are without social protections (ILO, 2017, *World Social Protection Report*). That separation created by uneven access to the right to security of being affects all. The poverty of our brothers and sisters impacts the wealth and wellbeing of our families. This is not "their" problem, it is "our" failure. We are, as Martin Luther King reminded us, "caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny." And so, the core value of Justice remains unmet in our lives until we rectify this stratification.

Calls for social protections demand governments meet "the basic needs of all." But what motivates those who "have" to set aside resources for the insurance of a dignified life for those who have not? When we see our role as global citizens, we find this will in the belief that we are all interconnected — what affects one, affects me, and affects all.

Collaboration and Cooperation — Through the tool of Global Citizenship, we collaborate and cooperate instead of competing. We find strength in coming together, in gathering wisdom across sectors, in harnessing the resources found when we work

multilaterally. We *Co-Operate*, working side by side toward a common goal. It will take this willingness to give and take, to pull together our resources, to seek mutual good in order to create the fiscal and social systems necessary for the security of all.

Equality — Global Citizenship places equality at the center of policy and action. As one humanity, we all have an equally valuable role in our shared society. Women and men, old and young, persons of all races, religions, and identities — from a Global Citizenship lens we stand equal with each other and equally stand up for one another. Policies that ensure access to equitable livelihoods, an equal place at all levels of professional careers, and fiscal empowerment for all play a significant role in the achieving this equality. Global Citizenship is, moreover, a rights-based approach to conceptualizing and implementing social protections.

For us to uphold equality as a value, we must ensure access to a secure livelihood for all, and we must put in place a solid floor of social security on which those who need support can stand. This is a human right as noted in the Declaration of Human Rights "Everyone who works has the right to just and favourable remuneration ensuring … an existence worthy of human dignity, and supplemented, if necessary, by other means of social protection" (1948, Article 23.3).

Human Dignity — Global Citizenship is a commitment to fostering and defending human dignity. In many of the documents under review during this CSoCD as well as UN statements and proposals coming out of alignments such as the African Union, social protection and inclusion are often paired with idea of empowerment of humanity, human rights, and the dignity of all.

Plan of Action on Ageing, Article 6: "When ageing is embraced as an achievement, the reliance on human skills, experiences and resources of the higher age groups is naturally recognized as an asset in the growth of mature, fully integrated, humane societies."

African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights to Social Protection and Social Security: "States Parties Shall … Protect the rights of citizens to human dignity and to equal treatment in relation to social protection and social security."

ILO and UNDG: "Expanding people's access to social protection is both a way to advance human rights and a sound economic policy" (2014, Helen Clark and Guy Ryder).

Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities, "The purpose of the Rules is to ensure that girls, boys, women and men with disabilities, as members of their societies, may exercise the same rights and obligations as others. .Persons with disabilities…should play an active role as partners in this process."

As these documents demonstrate, we have evolved away from past conceptions of social welfare as a stop-gap for those who are "incapable" and realized instead the *capacity* of all. To this end, committing to a base value of *human dignity* demands that social protections be mechanisms for strengthening, for empowering, and for including all persons as actors in policy, implementation, and progress.

Unity in Diversity — Unity implies all. In Unity we seek to find, to see, to hear, and to value the contribution of *all* in all of our diverse forms. From the perspective of Global Citizenship, diversity is never a hierarchy with some pushed beneath in order for others to stand on top. Diversity is a democracy of the varied ways of being and varied ways of seeing possible in our global society. We gain strength when efforts embrace not only the commonly shared ideas but also the diversity. It is in hearing both what we agree upon and what we have on our own failed to see that the

"marginalized" voices find equitable space in decisions and actions that affect all. In *Unity*, differences must be called upon in order to create a more complete "whole." From the tool of Global Citizenship, we use our diversified union in finding innovative solutions and taking action toward what is right not only for those who are already included, but also for those who have been left behind.

All who have come to the this 57th Session of the Commission for Social Development already know the importance of equitable wages, fiscal safety nets, and social protections in achieving all of the aims of the Sustainable Development Goals. All who have come individually to this session also care about rights and dignity of those left behind and see the potential for fiscal measures to help those left behind not only catch up but more importantly, contribute to our shared future. The will of those gathered at this 57th session is present. Therefore, what we call for now is a *unification* of that will, a coming together as global citizens and through true collaboration on the common ground of our shared commitment to equality and dignity for all.